

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 TRSY-02 IGA-02 L-03 /021 W
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P 031955Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8890

INFO DEA/HEADQUARTERS WASHDC

AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 5035

SECSTATE FOR S/NM/AMB VANCE; DEA HDQRS FOR ENOL;

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, PA

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS-PARAGUAY

REF: (A) ASUNCION 4445 R271305Z OCT 76; (B) CARACAS 13333
DATED 11/10/76.

1. IN REFTEL A THE EMBASSY REQUESTED ALLOCATION OF \$12,000 IN OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS FOR FY-77 IN ORDER TO PROVIDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR THE GOP NARCOTICS REPRESSION EFFORTS IN PARAGUAY. SUBSEQUENT TO THAT REQUEST, THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS FOR PARAGUAY WERE NOT APPROVED (REFTEL B). THE EMBASSY STRONGLY URGES THAT THE DECISION TO DISALLOW OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS FOR PARAGUAY BE RECONSIDERED.

2. THE NATIONAL NARCOTICS DEPARTMENT (DNN) WITH WHOM DEA NOW HAS A VERY CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP, WILL BE OUT OF BUSINESS, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, IF SUPPORT FUNDS ARE WITHHELD. THIS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO HAPPEN. UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP, SINCE ITS REORGANIZATION (OFFICIALLY EFFECTIVE SEPT. 21, 1976), THE DNN IS NOW MAKING AN HONEST EFFORT TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFICIENT NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT. GIVEN THE POLITICAL REALITIES OF CORRUPTION AMONG HIGHER-UP GOP OFFICIALS AND THE COURTS AND INADEQUATE GOP FINANCIAL SUPPORT, THIS IS A DIFFICULT TASK. WITHOUT CONSIDERABLE U.S. SUPPORT IT IS A HOPELESS ONE.

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3. PRIMARILY DUE TO EMBASSY EFFORTS, GOP FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE DNN, ALTHOUGH STILL WOEFULLY INADEQUATE, HAS INCREASED SINCE THE SEPTEMBER, 1976 REORGANIZATION. A TOTAL OF FIVE SERVICEABLE VEHICLES VALUED AT \$25,000, ALL OF WHICH WERE SEIZED BY DNN IN NARCOTICS CASES, HAVE BEEN PLACED AT THE DISPOSITION OF THE DNN DIRECTOR FOR USE IN NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT. IN THE PAST, ALL VEHICLES SEIZED WERE EITHER SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION OR GIVEN TO HIGHER-UP GOP OFFICIALS FOR OFFICIAL AND/OR UNOFFICIAL USE. IN ADDITION, THE PARAGUAYAN LEGISLATURE APPROVED \$26,000 OF A \$56,000 BUDGET SUBMITTED BY THE DNN DIRECTOR FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1977. ALMOST ALL OF THE FUNDS APPROVED ARE EARMARKED FOR THE SALARIES OF DNN PERSONNEL, BUT WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL FEBRUARY, 1977. IN THE MEAN-TIME, THE DNN AGENTS ARE BEING PAID MERE SUBSISTENCE WAGES FROM ASUNCION CAPITAL POLICE FUNDS. THERE ARE NO FUNDS AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE GASOLINE FOR THE DNN VEHICLES NOR TO PROVIDE PER DIEM FOR NARCITOC INVESTIGATIONS OUTSIDE THE CAPITAL AREA.

4. THE EFFECT UPON DEA OPERATINS OF A CUT OFF OF OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS TO THE DNN SHOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED. THE GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH DNN WHICH DEA NOW ENJOYS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SUFFER IF OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS FOR DNN ARE DISALLOWED. THE DNN DIRECTOR, REALIZING FULLY THAT A SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTED CASE AGAINST A MAJOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKER IN PARAGUAY IS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE, SUPPORTS WHOLE-HERTEDLY DEA'S INTELLIGENCE GATHERING EFFORTS ORIENTED TOWARD ARRESTS AND PROSECUTIONS IN THE U.S. OR THIRD COUNTRIES. THE DNN IS STEADILY BUILDING UP ITS OWN NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING CAPABILITY. THIS IS EXPECTED NOT ONLY TO BENIFIT U.S. AND THIRD COUNTRY NARCOTICS REPRESSION EFFORTS BUT ALSO TO PROVIDE A MOE REALISTIC PICTURE OF PARAGUAY'S OWN DRUG ABUSE PROBLEMS, THUS PAVING THE WAY FOR INCREASED GOP SUPPORT OF THE DNN'S NARCOTICS REPRESSION EFFORTS.

5. IF THE DECISION TO CUT OFF OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS FOR PARAGUAY STANDS, THE TREND TOWARD IMPROVED GOP NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT IN PARAGUAY WILL BE REVERSED AND DEA'S LIAISON AND INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING MISSION MAY BE JEOPARDIZED. IT WOULD ALSO ALMOST INEVITABLY BE INTERPRETED BY SENOR GOP

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OFFICIALS AS A RELAXATION OF VIGILANCE ON OUR PART AND A DIMINISHED CONCERN OVER PARAGUAY'S ROLE IN THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. THIS COULD WELL ENCOURAGE THOSE SUSPECTED VIOLATORS WITH CLOSE TIES TO CERTAIN GOP OFFICIALS TO STEP UP ACTIVITIES IN AND THROUGH PARAGUAY. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FUNDS ARE PROVIDED, CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN EACH OF THESE AREAS CAN REASONABLY BE EXPECTED.

BRIGGS

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